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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, November 14, 2016, at 2 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You sustain us with Your unfailing love, for Your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Use our Senators to accomplish Your purposes in our Nation and world. May they tackle the complex challenges of our times with the confidence that Your providence will prevail. Train them in the school of humility so that they will walk safely without stumbling. May they remember that humility precedes honor.

Lord, bless and protect America, making it a land that provides freedom's lamp to our world. Incline each citizen to hear Your words of truth and to apply his or her heart to knowledge.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARASSO). The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in this Republican Congress—especially as we head out for yet another unearned recess—I feel compelled to comment on how Republicans have treated the President of the United States during the last 8 years.

History will look back and note that the Republicans in Congress treated President Obama with unprecedented disrespect. No one expected them to agree with everything that he did or tried to do, but Americans deserve better than the way Republicans behaved toward President Obama.

A day or two after President Obama was elected the first time, Republicans met here in Washington—all the Republican big names—and they came to two conclusions. No. 1, Obama would not be reelected. They failed on that one quite miserably. But No. 2, they would oppose everything that President Obama tried to do, and they have stuck by that without any question.

America would be better off with a responsible opposition party that found a way to make its differences with President Obama clear without treating him with such contempt. But, sadly, that is not what they saw from Republicans over the past 8 years.

President Obama is the first President to be denied a hearing on his budget. He is the first President to be denied a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee. President Obama is the first President to be asked to show his birth certificate. President Obama is the first President who has faced over 500 filibusters here in the Senate. In this Republican Senate, President Obama

will see fewer nominations confirmed than any President in many, many decades.

Republicans have not done their basic work of government, and they have not stood by their commitments to restore regular order or to pass a budget.

Republicans have spent their time doing everything in their power to discredit President Obama and empower Donald Trump. That is not a legacy that any Senator should be proud of.

I listened to public radio this morning, and the Arizona Republic, from the big city of Phoenix, right next to Nevada, for the first time in its history of more than 120 years—for the first time in its history—endorsed a Democratic Presidential nominee. It had never been done before. It is a Republican newspaper. I listened to the editor of the newspaper on the radio this morning saying they couldn't. Why? Because of Donald Trump.

The legacy of Donald Trump should not be anything the Republicans are proud of. The only thing Republicans have done this year was to prove that they are the party of Trump. They are the party of Trump. They say they are not the party of Trump, but they are. They would have us believe that Trump just fell out of the sky and somehow mysteriously became the nominee of the party, but that is not the way it is.

Everything he has said, stood for, done in this bizarre campaign he has run has come, filtered up, from what has gone on here in the Republican Senate—disagreeing with everything—anything—President Obama wanted.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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They filibustered things they agreed with just to slow things down.

Trump is no anomaly. He is the monster the Republicans built. He is their Frankenstein monster. They own him.

All we have to do to see that the Republicans are the party of Trump is to look at the way they have treated President Obama. He is a good man, a good family man. He has a great education. He is a good communicator. He has written two best-selling books. Everyone knows he can communicate orally. He deserved better than the unprecedented disrespect the Republicans have shown toward him.

America, which twice elected Barack Obama to be its President, deserves better—much, much better. It is a shame what has not been done, and it is a shame what has been done.

Mr. President, I note that my friend the Republican leader is not here. I will suggest the absence of a quorum, and the Chair can announce the business of the day following his appearance here.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 954

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 954) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt from the individual mandate certain individuals who had coverage under a terminated qualified health plan funded through the Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan (CO-OP) program.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

TRIBUTE TO DALLAS POLICE CHIEF DAVID BROWN

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to start today by offering a word of gratitude to retiring Dallas police chief David Brown, who will retire from his long career of public service this Tuesday.

Chief Brown became the face of a terrible tragedy that occurred in Texas a few weeks ago when five police officers were gunned down in cold blood. Frankly, I had many colleagues and other people whom I have run into ask me about him because he made such a positive impression with his calmness under difficult circumstances and his leadership qualities.

The incident occurred last July when 12 law enforcement officers were shot, and 5 were killed. I remember attending the memorial service with President Obama and the First Lady, as well as President George W. Bush and Laura Bush, and the chief spoke then along with Mayor Rawlings. I can't tell you how grateful I am that, at a time when people think Washington has lost its way, we still have strong, articulate, compassionate leaders like Chief Brown and Mayor Rawlings.

Chief Brown is retiring after 33 years of service to the Dallas police force. As a result of the attention he got from all of the publicity surrounding this terrible tragedy in July, the chief became a little bit of a folk hero, I guess, and people began to listen to what he had to say about a lot of different things. One of the things he would like to say is "Dallas loves." He made that a bit of a rallying cry following the attack. His actions in the aftermath of that tragedy certainly demonstrated his belief in that statement.

Of course, while many Americans know Chief Brown from his leadership during the shooting in July, Dallasites have benefited from his service for a long time. He grew up in Oak Cliff in southwest Dallas and has been on the Dallas police force for the last 33 years. I know the people of Dallas will miss his leadership and hearing him sing a little Stevie Wonder from time to time.

I want to express my gratitude and thanks to Chief Brown and wish him well in the next chapter of his life.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION AND SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday we finally were able to move legislation forward that would keep the lights on here in Washington, at least until December, and provided very important relief that I want to emphasize.

There is flood relief for States like Texas, but not just Texas—Maryland, West Virginia, Louisiana, and Iowa, all of which will benefit from the flood relief that is provided for in this continuing resolution that was passed yesterday and was passed by the House as well.

More importantly, perhaps, is the support for veterans programs and military construction. It is important that we pass legislation to meet our responsibilities to support our men and women in uniform wherever they may be serving, whether here at home or abroad.

Thanks to the leadership of the Senator from Ohio and the Senator from New Hampshire, we passed legislation that will provide additional funds to deal with the opioid epidemic that is ravaging many parts of our country. As a medical doctor, the Presiding Officer knows that people unfortunately get hooked on opioid prescription drugs. Frequently, when that runs out, they often opt for cheaper, more plentiful heroin, which, when mixed with other ingredients such as fentanyl, makes it even more deadly and more likely that they will overdose with the use of this heroin laced with fentanyl. We have provided additional funds in this continuing resolution to deal with that.

Finally, but very significantly, we also were able to break the impasse over funding for Zika. As we have come to learn, Zika is a mosquito-borne virus that has the potential of causing terrible birth defects in children. We have seen pictures of children with shrunken skulls from the microcephaly caused by this terrible mosquito-borne virus.

We had been trying since last May to get that Zika funding done. For some reason, even though the amount of the funding, \$1.1 billion, was agreed upon, our Democratic colleagues wouldn't take yes for an answer. Finally, yesterday, they decided to give up their filibuster and allow this legislation and this important funding to be done. My point is that we could have done this a long time ago. In fact, we wouldn't have had to pass the continuing resolution taking us over to December—just 10 weeks from now, when we will have to start all over again—if it weren't for the obstructionism and filibustering of our Democratic colleagues.

Of course, the cause of this is a fight over Federal spending. We know there are caps on discretionary spending, and many of our Members, myself included, have become very concerned in this very dangerous world we live in that we have shortchanged our military and our national security support. So in order to get additional spending for our troops abroad and at home and to make sure that we are prepared for the next threat to our country, we increased spending for the Department of Defense, but the costs of doing that were increases in nondefense discretionary spending. Thus we get back into the same old fight, which unfortunately has left us \$19 trillion in debt, where spending is simply out of control.

That is the reason we ended up in this posture. It is highly regrettable.